7: Gulick E-5 (1952) 1955 ME1 Lebanon ME1

lished no identification with its urban surroundings nor to have established any strong ties with non-Munqifin. These people are, of course, by no means cut off from the village. People come and go from the village constantly for brief visits. The evening gatherings of this group are similar in form to those in the village proper.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The majority of men and women smoke cigarettes, and the rate of consumption appears to be high. European briar pipes are not smoked at all, but the old-fashioned water pipe is still enjoyed both by men and women.

It has been mentioned before that foreign influence has been particularly strong in the field of communication. Communication and means of entertainment overlap in such things as radio, the movies, books, magazines, and newspapers. Owing to its lack of electricity, Munqif has only three battery-run radios, and this instrument is not particularly important in the village as a means of entertainment. The available programs are limited in scope, consisting mostly of news and "disk-jockey" broadcasts. From his limited observation, the writer was impressed with the esthetic appeal of the spoken word (radio broadcasts are in Classical Arabic) to the listeners.

Cities like Beirut are over-equipped, if anything, with movie houses which show Egyptian, European, and American pictures indiscriminately. There is no question but that they provide welcome diversion and enlarge the villagers' horizons, although the American movies have spread some very erroneous impressions of life in America. To some degree there is a cult of movie-star worship, but this is far less pronounced than it is in America, and it appears to be limited to the leading lights of the Egyptian screen.

Illustrated weeklies and paper-bound novels are very numerous and widely distributed. Their format seems crude to eyes which are accustomed to slick periodicals. The novels, for example, tend to have garish illustrated covers which are reminiscent of "pulps." However, this impression is deceptive, for most appear to be serious works by Arab authors or translations of Western best-sellers and classics. For example, Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* were two which were being read in the village. In addition, there is in Munqif some distribution of imported American paperbacks. No generalizations can be made here about the effect of this literature on the villagers. It can be said, however, that it seemed clear that Classical Arabic, spoken, retains a great deal of affective force which transcends the actual content of what is being said or recited. Western literature, on the other hand, is read merely out of intellectual curiosity or for sheer diversion, but it carries no emotional or esthetic charge.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
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SYRIA MDI

In neither country is there an officer caste or a strong military tradition, though the present Syrian regime is trving to create one.

Social Survey

The ruling class in both countries is drawn from wealthy families; titles do not exist and the 'old' rich families, whose position and wealth come from land, mix freely with the 'new' rich families, whose money comes from commerce. There is no stigma in engaging in trade and even members of the upper class are merchants. A middle class of functionaries and employees has been growing up since 1948 in the three main cities. Their flats, between the splendour of the rich quarter and the huddle of the *suq*, are being built in quantities and their new, middle-class way of life is based on European standards. The mass of the people are artisans and labourers. The urban artisan approaches the middle class and the rural labourer approaches the hard life of the nomad; for the farm labourer the standard of living is generally low.

The Press

The press of both countries is important but no one paper or group of papers has established an ascendancy. Damascus had at one time over twenty daily papers none of which could guarantee a circulation of over 3,000. The same state of affairs holds true in Beirut where most parties issue Arabic and in some cases French papers; there are also Armenian newspapers and one English daily.

Individual Lebanese have founded papers and *Le Commerce du Levant*, published in Beirut, has a standing comparable with *La Bourse Egyptienne*. In both countries press censorship has frequently closed down a paper only for it to re-emerge under another name, and in Syria the military dictatorship has reduced the press to a mere mouthpiece of official propaganda.

Education

In both countries there are primary and secondary schools, and the number of schools and students increase each year. Primary education is compulsory, and although reliable figures of literacy are not available,[1] it may be assumed that the percentage of illiterates is decreasing in both countries, but is higher in Syria than in Lebanon. In Syria, most of the schools are run by the state and of the private schools (which are

[1] An estimate for Syria for 1947 given in UN, Dept. of Social Affairs, *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation*, 1952, was 40–50 per cent.

iii. The 'Sûreté Générale', the organization responsible for internal security. It had always been in French hands, although in principle the local police and gendarmerie were under the control of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments. S L 648 625

iv. The control of the Beduin.

v. The censorship of the press, which was in French hands, although there was also a British military censor. (Shortly after the accession of the new Syrian and Lebanese Governments to power, they set up their own political censorships, which did not, however, replace that of the French, but were additional to it.) S L 648 204

Thirdly, in addition to these legislative and administrative limitations, there were various restrictions even on those powers which the Governments possessed : S L 648

i. Their freedom of action was restricted by the great influence of the administrative and technical 'conseillers', who, although officials of the Governments and in theory subordinate to the Ministers whom they advised, were in practice almost all-powerful in the departments to which they were attached.

ii. Another restriction arose from the existence of the officers of the 'Services Spéciaux' who were scattered throughout the country. In theory they were the Delegate-General's intelligence officers, but in practice they had always exercised a virtually unlimited authority in their regions : an authority which they had enforced where necessary by means of the 'Gardes Mobiles', a semi-military police force which they had at their disposal. Among other things, the control of the frontiers was in their hands.

The nationalists had always demanded the recognition of the two Parliaments as the sole sources of legislation ; the transfer of the Common Interests and other similar services to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments ; the abolition of the 'Services Spéciaux' officers and a curtailment in the powers of the 'conseillers'. It was clear that these demands would be pressed with vigour by the new Nationalist Governments, partly because of the principles involved but also because of concrete advantages to be gained from them. For example, control of the customs would give them power to regulate fiscal policy and thus indirectly to assist industry and trade, and would place in their hands an important source of S L 648 186